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THE HONORABLE DARRELL ISSA

Tribute to 150th Anniversary of Temecula Post Office

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Madam Speaker, today marks the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Temecula Post Office. In 1859, at its establishment, it became only one of seven post offices in California south of the Tehachapi Mountains.

John Butterfield, an experienced stagecoach company owner was awarded a contract to deliver mail between St. Louis, Missouri and San Francisco, California. There was a time consideration in the contract requiring that each trip be completed in 25 days. On September 16, 1858, Mr. Butterfield began the first east to west journey and it was completed in 23 days and 23 hours.

Six months after the passage of the first Butterfield Stage through Temecula, U.S. President James Buchanan appointed Louis A. Rouen as the first Temecula Postmaster on April 22, 1859. Rouen served at the Magee store, near what is now Margarita Road and the Temecula Parkway. This was the first of the fourteen post office sites that have been used in the collection and distribution of Temecula's mail; the post office location changed frequently during the ensuing decades.

It was located in several places including private residences, the Wolf Store, the Machado Stores, the train station, the Palomar and the Temecula Hotels, Hall's Café, Security Pacific Bank and the two sites operating today.

During its journey to and from Temecula, mail may have been in ships, planes, 18 wheelers, golf carts and many other conveyances including the last mule train delivery used in the United States. Mail Service in Temecula has been a significant part of the community for a century and a half. It is sometimes little appreciated except by those who serve. Following September 11, 2001 the Postal Service ran a series of reminders in magazines, papers and on television that summarize what they do for the citizens of Temecula and our Nation.

“We are mothers and fathers. And sons and daughters who every day go about our lives with duty, honor and pride. And neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night, nor winds of change, nor a nation challenged, will stay us from our appointed rounds. Ever.”

Still standing today, the Temecula Post Office is a monument to the faithful and dedicated work of the men and women who have served the community for 150 years.